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February 28, 1961

DRAFT LETTER TO CHAIRMAN, IIC, FROM CHAIRMAN, ICIS

SUBJECT: Protection of Nonclassified Strategic Information
NSC 5427 (Re ICIS Problem 64)

Your letter of January 13, 1961, transmitted Interdepartmental Intelligence Conference comments regarding a report prepared by the Interdepartmental Committee on Internal Security Subcommittee on Industrial Security concerning the protection of nonclassified strategic information.

The ICIS is concerned over the situation noted in the IIC letter regarding the fact that Soviet bloc representatives in the United States reap a fruitful and extensive harvest of valuable information without resorting to covert or other activities used by intelligence agents elsewhere. The report attributed to a defected Soviet bloc intelligence agent that the Soviet Military Attache in Washington is able to obtain legally an estimated ninety-five per cent of the material valuable to its intelligence objectives seems indicative of the magnitude of the security problem involved in this area. However, as recognized by the IIC, the present situation is in great measure due to the differences in form of government and differences in attitude toward the publication and dissemination of information.

With reference to publications released by the Government Printing Office, the ICIS, as noted in the attached letter dated _____ has advised the Secretary of Commerce of the suggestion that Office of

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Technical Services consult with the Department of State and the GPO in an effort to use more of the material available at the GPO for exchange purposes as a means of obtaining comparable Soviet material in return. Commerce has been requested to include information regarding the results of the consideration accorded the above proposal pertaining to the GPO in the next report to ICIS on implementation of paragraph 3 of NSC 5427.

In view of the IIC comments regarding the desirability of having an over-all evaluation of the program, the ICIS reviewed this aspect of the problem again. Regarding the IIC view that some examinations should be made of the materials which the United States is receiving from the Soviet bloc through overt collections processes, ICIS inquiries have disclosed that procedures of this nature are currently in effect.

The Committee on Procurement of Foreign Publications under the USIB is responsible for reviewing the general status of the program for acquiring foreign publications and documents. In addition, an Exploitation Committee, composed of representatives of the various government agencies participating in our overt Soviet bloc collection efforts, meets monthly to review current operations of this program and to make sure that information being received obtains the maximum distribution and utilization. Although specific evaluations of a qualitative or quantitative nature of acquisitions under this program are not now being performed, the State Department Office of Coordinator for Foreign Publications, which is responsible for operations of the publication procurement program in the USSR, has indicated that at

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present our publication procurement program appears to be working very well since the U.S. is receiving not only a greater volume of material than ever before but also is receiving more useful publications.

The information in the preceding paragraph appears to confirm previous findings, dated December 17, 1959, by an NSC Planning Board Ad Hoc Committee which reviewed NSC 5427 and discussed the importance and value of the publications acquired from the Soviet bloc. Therefore, the Committee does not believe that it should take further action to evaluate this program at the present time.

Sincerely yours,

CHAIRMAN, ICIS

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